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SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Letter dated 22 April 1993 from the Permanent Representative of Austria to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to enclose the text of a document entitled "Austrian Concept for University Development Cooperation" (see annex). I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as an official document of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development.

(Signed) Peter HOHENFELLNER
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Austria
to the United Nations

Annex

AUSTRIAN CONCEPT FOR UNIVERSITY DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

CONCEPTION FOR THE FUTURE

Principles

1. Austria as a small industrial country with a high level of education and a profound technical know-how can - as concerns development cooperation in general - offer the most competitive development cooperation in the field of "Human Resources Development".

2. Education provides the means for self-help; despite the low costs (compared to other sectors) it is the most sustainable and the most efficient medium- or long-term form of development cooperation.

3. A well-designed conception for a long-term application can and should turn Austria into a shining example for others in this field.

4. The conception should be drafted in such a way that it can easily be adapted to any partner country and as concerns its performance it should be tuned to specific needs and sustainable success.

5. The conception should allow realization in the form of country- or region-specific programmes and provide the possibility of focussing on selected targets.

6. The conception should incorporate all institutions capable of contributing (commercial enterprises included) in Austria and in the partner country for joining efforts in the most efficient way.

7. Beneficiaries of these programmes should establish a lasting bond with Austria without being alienated from their own cultural background.

8. Austria's image in these target countries as a "nation of high-level technical and scientific education" will influence the evaluation of Austria's products for a long time and thus have a positive effect on commercial relationships as well.

9. The universities and their administrative organization responsible for DC must be granted a leading role and extensive autonomy as far as planning, decisions and performing of the projects is concerned

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10. The financial support of the projects must be secured for longer periods (at least five years) and all the relevant project components should be designed as joint packages; measures for furthering should be optimized as concerns efficiency and expenses

REALIZATION

1. Model of Successive Levels

Adaptability of the concept to the conditions of the developing country requires several levels of educational development cooperation. On the one hand it should be geared to the actual needs of the country (=demand), to the existing Austrian capacity for solving problems (=supply), and to the usability of the knowledge transfered, on the other hand it should be worked out on the basis of an analysis of the economic situation and the level of educational institutions in the benefitting country. In principle a programme involving several levels should form the basis for every educational DC; the individual developing country is analyzed considering its specific needs and local conditions, then the levels applicable for this country are worked out.

In the following a brief survey of this programme with its individual levels is presented, using the abbreviations listed below for reasons of lucidity:

BC	...	benefitting country
F	...	measures for furthering
L	...	location (where the project is to be performed)
LDC	...	low development countries (BCs with low income)

LLDC ... least developed countries ("poorest countries")

MDC ... medium development countries (BCs with medium income)

A ... Austria

TE ... travel expenses

UP ... university partnerships

TG ... target group

As mentioned above, each developing country has to be analyzed individually so as to evaluate the applicable levels; thus certain conditions can lead to the fact that very low developed countries can be attributed higher levels in certain aspects. This will be the exception, though, rather than the rule.

LEVELS:

Level A: vocational and technical colleges, tourism colleges

L: BC

TG: LLDC, LDC; in case of regional utilization: MDC

F: construction of institutions, equipment, on-place-grants, teaching staff

Level B: universities - bachelor degree level

L: BC if available, another MDC, A only in special cases

TG: LLDC, LDC

F: on-place-grants, south-south-grants, A-grants + TE

Level C: universities - master degree

L: MDC or A (only sandwich programmes esp. within UP)

TG: LDC, MDC

F: on-place-grants, south-south-grants, A-grants + TE, guest professors

Level D: universities - doctoral degree

L: A , in case of established UP also MDC (sandwich programmes)

TG: MDC, exceptionally also LDC/LLDC

F: A - grants + TE, basic equipment after finishing the project (for LLDC/LDC), guest professor

Level E: postgraduate/ postdoctoral

E1: courses

L: DC or A, TG: LDC, MDC

F: costs for courses/grants/TE/teaching staff

E2: postgraduate/ postdoctoral research

L: A, TG: MDC, F: A-grants + TE, teaching staff

2. Country-Specific Programmes

For priority countries a complete range of offers, geared to local needs and to the degree of development, should be worked out. Other countries of the region should be incorporated in these programmes as partners and/or beneficiaries (and for supplying special services available, e.g.: MDC for LDC, LLDC). In selected, favourably situated BC, special regionally acting "Austrian Centres" can be established in cooperation with local partners for educational purposes.

The definition of priority countries and regions must be worked out according to the availability of offers from the Austrian side, as a sustainable educational development cooperation can only be carried out within long-term contacts to relevant institutions in the benefitting developing country. Accordingly the definition of priority regions and countries should be worked out together with the performing institutions (=universities).

The secondary language of these countries must also be taken into consideration in order to secure a broad range of offers on the Austrian side (at present mainly available in English).

3. Ensuring Sustainability and a Lasting Bond with Austria

"Austrian Fellows":
Supporting of the BC student in the form of "sponsorship"; the continuation of this support in the next level will be guaranteed in case of successful studies in the preceding level and in case of demand.

4. Prevention of Cultural Alienation

Support should be given in the home country or in another, similar country of the region in the form of on-place-, regional- (=South-South) or sandwich-grants as far as feasible.

A positive side effect of this form of support is the reduced expenses compared to a support for studies in Austria.

5. Institutions Carrying out Programmes

Dealing with matters of tertiary education, with the exception of vocational colleges, the main work will be done by Austrian universities, the Austrian Academy of Sciences and the institutions of the aforementioned. Thus their opinion and consent should be sought consistently when planning or carrying out any measures, as they have to do the actual work and will be responsible for the success of these programmes.

For performing and taking care of such programmes long-term financial means should be assigned to these institutions.

Following institutions are to be appointed for carrying out these programme packages:

1. A permanent committee ("Council for Educational Development Cooperation") is to be set up consisting of representatives of the Austrian Rectors' Conference and/or representatives of the universities (4-5), of the Federal Ministry for Science and Research (1-2), of the Academy of Sciences and of the department within the Federal Government in charge of development cooperation. This committee is to be assigned the task of administering the "Master-Plan" and the working out of all programmes. In case of demand the committee may consult experts for individual programmes and special questions.

2. For focus countries or regions special representatives (university professors or associate professors) are to be appointed, who should coordinate all programmes with the local administrative institutions and visit the target country for this purpose regularly, but at least once a year, taking part also in scholarhship candidate selection procedures. This special representatives are to be appointed by the Rectors' Conference. In case of demand they can be given authority of decision (according to Point 1) by the committee for special problems and they work in cooperation with the authorities representing Austria in the target country and support these authorities in matters concerning education.

3. The ÖAD as a joint institution of all the Austrian universities administers all the grant and courses programmes as well as infrastructural concomitant measures and will act as "project carrier" for all universitary projects, within which the Rectors' Conference, the universities and their institutions cannot be directly put in charge of performing the projects.

4. The Commission for Development Cooperation of the Austrian Academy of Sciences is responsible for the financing of specific projects and in case of demand also for the evaluation of applications for projects.

6. Programme Measures

For the realization of the conception following measures are to be taken which would ensure the performance of individual projects as well as project packages, university partnerships or country specific projects.

College Level

* establishing and expanding technical/vocational schools in priority regions in cooperation with equivalent institutions in Austria
* supporting of school partnerships
* on-place and south-south-grants for suitable candidates
* assisting the establishment of specialized colleges (comparable to German "Fachhochschule") in developing countries could be envisaged as the next step to be taken after the vocational school level as a link between college level and university level.

University Level

a) Universitary Scholarship Programmes

* redefining and expanding the North-South-Dialogue Scholarship Programme: conception for several successive years, more grantees, autonomous allocation by implementing organizations (ÖAD) or universities, inclusion of travel costs, basic equipment for former students from LDC/LLDC who obtained their doctoral degree from an Austrian university in order to enable them to continue their work in their home countries, home leave made possible for students staying several years in Austria.
* South-South-Scholarship Programme
* On-Place-Scholarship Programme
* providing sufficient accommodation in Austrian student hostels for all grantees

* expansion of the subsidy programme beyond the North-South-Dialogue Programme for students from BC (supporting grants)

b) university partnerships

* a regular autonomous DC-budget provided by the Federal Department for DC for all university partnerships with universities of developing countries
* special priority to universitary applications for DC projects submitted to the Federal Department for DC
* special grants for Austrians who want to undergo further training at a partner university in a developing country so as to educate future specialists for development cooperation in Austria

c) post-graduate courses

* courses lasting from some weeks up to two years, specially geared to the practical application of the knowledge required for improving the infrastructure and quality of life in developing countries (providing a diploma for graduates)

d) DC-relevant courses

* every university faculty is to offer courses concerning DC. Additionally, interdisciplinary seminaries are to be provided
* diploma studies curriculum for DC specialists established at one of the Austrian universities
* DC-related lectures, seminaries, excursions and/or establishment of graduate study programmes focussing on DC to be offered at Austrian universities.

e) establishment of "Austrian Centres"

In priority countries or regions local educational centres are to be established and supervised in cooperation with local universities; besides basic equipment, salaries for staff and cost for maintenance are to be provided for.

f) Partaking in international networks

monitored by educational institutions like UN universities and research institutions in developing countries.

g) Assisting students from developing countries

* enforcing and expanding the network of ÖAD consultants assisting students with problems occurring within their studies or projects, providing information, solving problems and supervising success - independently of the immediate scientific host
* Austrian "tutors" recruited from among students for the initial period (arrival in Austria, dealings with government authorities, introduction into universitary life)
* establishment of an emergency fund for short term assistance

h) cooperation with commercial enterprises

* committee for establishing contacts between universities and commercial enterprises for joint educational projects
* special grant programme for educational projects, implemented jointly by universities and commercial enterprises

i) infrastructural measures in Austria

* reservation of student hostel rooms for students from developing countries including those not receiving a grant
* economy-priced guest rooms für shorther stays of lecturers from developing countries
* social events for facilitating contacts between university staff from Austria and from developing countries

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